

## CHARIVARIA.

ONE hundred painters engaged on the battleship *Queen Mary* have come out on strike. Every effort will be made to prevent a sympathetic strike on the part of the Royal Academicians.

A man in Colchester has killed five hundred rats in five weeks. We have often wondered how Colchester amused itself when not engaged in the serious business of eating oysters.

Except that he fell and sprained his ankle during the ceremony, was attacked by ptomaine poisoning at the subsequent dinner, and had to sail for America alone, owing to his bride missing the boat, the wedding of Mr. JULIUS WOERZ, of Schiedam, may be said to have gone off without a hitch.

The case of the elephant in WOMBWELL's menagerie, which recently ate £20 worth of notes, coming so soon after that of the bank-note-eating dog mentioned in these columns, makes it seem likely that, in a few years, domestic pets will be beyond the means of most of us.

The Press has once more begun to ask how cricket can be brightened. A little sunshine next summer would help.

Greenwich Observatory has looked into the matter, and reports that there are fifty-two million stars. The author of "*The Night Hath a Thousand Eyes*" will doubtless revise his lyric and bring it up to date.

A Spartan régime for the legal infant is advocated by Mr. Justice LUSH, who has laid it down in court that a stuffed iguana is not a "necessity."

The prudent habit of leaving the greater part of one's jewellery at the banker's seems to be spreading in America. A millionaire's wife has been seen at the opera at Los Angeles wearing gems valued at less than £80,000.

We have no confirmation, up to the moment of going to press, of the rumour that the members of the Dominion House of Commons who sang loudly during a great part of a recent sitting are to appear on the London music-hall stage as the Canadian Gag-Time Octette.

As tragic a case of the Devil and the Deep Sea as has ever come to our notice is revealed by the statement in a daily paper that only the institution of the side-whisker can cure the cloth-cap habit at Cambridge.



Genial Squire. "MANY HAPPY RETURNS, WILLIAM. I WAS JUST GOING TO CALL ON YOU WITH A LITTLE BIT OF TOBACCO."

William (aged 80). "THANKE YE KINDLY, SIR, BUT I BE DONE WI' SMOKIN'."

Genial Squire. "WHY, HOW'S THAT?"

William. "WELL, I'VE EARD THAT BETWEEN EIGHTY AN' NINETY'S A TICKLISH PART O' A MAN'S LIFE, SO I BE TAKIN' NO CHANCES."

Quite recently we mentioned the aviator who, when a thousand feet above London, recognised it by the unpleasant smell. We now read that a fox-terrier smelt its way back to the Metropolis from Birmingham.

Two motor-omnibuses collided the other evening, in Oxford Street. If this internecine strife is to become prevalent, the Traffic Problem may solve itself.

Has newspaper opinion no weight? While our journals, commenting on a recent case of alleged shop-lifting, were still ringing with condemnation of the practice of petty pilfering, a man at Stratford was sent to prison for stealing three iron boilers.

## The Great Impersonators.

"Of 15,000 women with votes for the London County Council, only 40,000 voted last Thursday, said the Rev. Silvester Horne, M.P., at Whitefield's Tabernacle on Sunday."

*Eastern Daily Press.*

Let this be a warning to us.

"The light-hearted verve and abandon with which she danced both this and the Polka Comique which preceded it carried her audience off their feet."

*Daily Colonist (B.C.)*

They simply had to join in.

"He is described as a man possessing a thick dark moustache of about 6ft. 7in. in weight. It is thought that he will probably visit Calcutta and the police have been directed to be on the look-out."—*Empire.*

They cannot miss him.

**"THE LONDON LOOK."**

[To a lady just returned from six years in Canada, who writes to *The Chronicle* to say that she notices "a difference that has taken place in Londoners" during her absence. "Coming from a land full of hope and promise for the future," she has been forcibly struck by "the sad and hopeless expression worn by the average Londoner."]

From regions of the Golden West,  
The promised land of boundless prairie,  
Where if you do but scratch the soil  
At once it teems with corn and oil,  
And Labour goes to work (or rest)  
Light-footed as a fairy;—

Land of the well-known Maple-leaf,  
Where legs are lithe and muscles limber,  
Where no one yet was heard to sigh,  
But all men wear a glad, glad eye  
That comes of canning fruits and beef  
And logging virgin timber;—

Where rolls of greenbacks, rolls and rolls,  
Drop from the trees (just like Utopia);  
Where Fortune smiles without a break,  
And all the world is on the make  
And carries in its button-holes  
A blooming cornucopia;—

From that Elysium homeward borne,  
You find yourself completely staggered,  
Treading once more our London ways,  
To note the contrast she betrays,  
The dull despair of lips forlorn,  
Of eyes how strangely haggard!

You say you can't account for this.  
Six summers back you left us cheery;  
Contentment sat on every brow  
Six little summers back, and now  
You see the same Metropolis  
Hopelessly dull and dreary.

Blithe as a bird that scales the sky,  
That day when you and London parted,  
We went about as though on air,  
Carolling lightly here and there.

What means this sad decline? Oh why,  
Why are we so downhearted?

Madam, we thank your fresher eyes  
Through which we pierce the humorous vapour  
That screens us from ourselves, and find  
How changed we are; but was it kind  
To send the news of your surprise  
Up to a *Liberal* paper?

Anyhow, here's a *Tory*'s view  
For light upon the situation:—  
Madam, six painful years ago  
Our sanguine hearts had yet to know  
What *LLOYD* could scheme and *GEORGE* could do  
To devastate the nation!

O. S.

**The Old Firm.**

"The wreath placed on behalf of his Majesty by his son, Prince Eitel Friedrich, at the foot of the statue to Frederick William III. at Breslau bore the inscription: 'God's and our firm will ensure victory to our just cause.'—*Morning Post*.

We are glad to see that the partnership goes on.

"Built on the lines of an old farmhouse kitchen, French girls in picturesque costumes flit about with cups of coffee and liqueurs."—*Everyman*.

And they talk about French figures!

**THE CHRISTENING OF CANBERRA.**

GREAT satisfaction is expressed amongst patriotic Australians that the Federal Government should have resolutely refused to emphasize the historical or personal associations of their country with the Mother-country, and have decided instead to call their capital, Canberra—a name which is at once Australian, indigenous and aboriginal. In view of the epoch-making nature of the event, we have invited the opinions of a number of leading patriots, scholars and littérateurs on the choice.

Mr. P. F. WARNER writes: "While disclaiming any right to dictate to the Commonwealth Government in this matter, I cannot help regretting that they have not seen their way to commemorate the greatest of all Australian products—cricket. For my own part, I have never disguised my belief that the best name for the new capital would be Trumpersville, though I admit that Spofforths-town has much to recommend it."

Mr. EDMUND GOSSE writes: "As the most intimate living friend of ROBERT BROWNING, FITZGERALD, GEORGE MEREDITH and TENNYSON, may I be permitted to express my regret that the claims of none of these great men have been regarded in the nomenclature of the new Australian capital?"

Mr. P. A. VAILE, the great lawn tennis and golf expert and author of *Wake up, England*, though himself a New Zealander, takes a keen interest in Australian politics. He writes: "The Australians have missed a great opportunity. They should have called their capital Boomeranga, or, perhaps, Bouméringue, in memory of the famous aboriginal missile which, when all is said and done, is the outstanding contribution of Australia to the inventions of the world. I may add that I have for many years been engaged in researches into the flight of the boomerang, in which the antagonism of topspin and undercut is reduced to a perfect harmony, and hope soon to publish them in a definitive monograph."

Sir GEORGE BIRDWOOD writes: "Inasmuch as philologists trace the derivation of the word to an aboriginal perversion of 'Cranberry,' a fruit which grows in great luxuriance on the spot, I can only say that I prefer it to Wallaby, Wattleton or Federalia."

Mr. THOMAS BEECHAM expresses regret, on the grounds of euphony, that the more melodious name of Myola was not chosen. "The termination -ola," he observes, "is consecrated to music—e.g., viola, pianola—though an exception must be made in the case of Gorgonzola—and naturally appeals with peculiar force to all persons of an artistic temperament."

Lord COURTY OF PENWITH writes: "I must confess to a bitter disappointment that the name which I suggested, viz. Proportionalia, with a view to celebrating the triumph of proportional representation, did not even achieve the distinction of serious consideration. I cannot profess enthusiasm for Canberra, but it is a great relief to me personally that Venus was not selected."

Sir EDWIN DURNING-LAWRENCE writes: "The only redeeming feature of the situation is the negative one that the name Shakespeare was rejected. For the Commonwealth to link its lot with the arch-impostor would have been a cosmic catastrophe."

The latest projected alliance between the Peerage and the Music Hall Stage is indicated by the following significant "exchange" advertisement in *The Motor Cycle*:

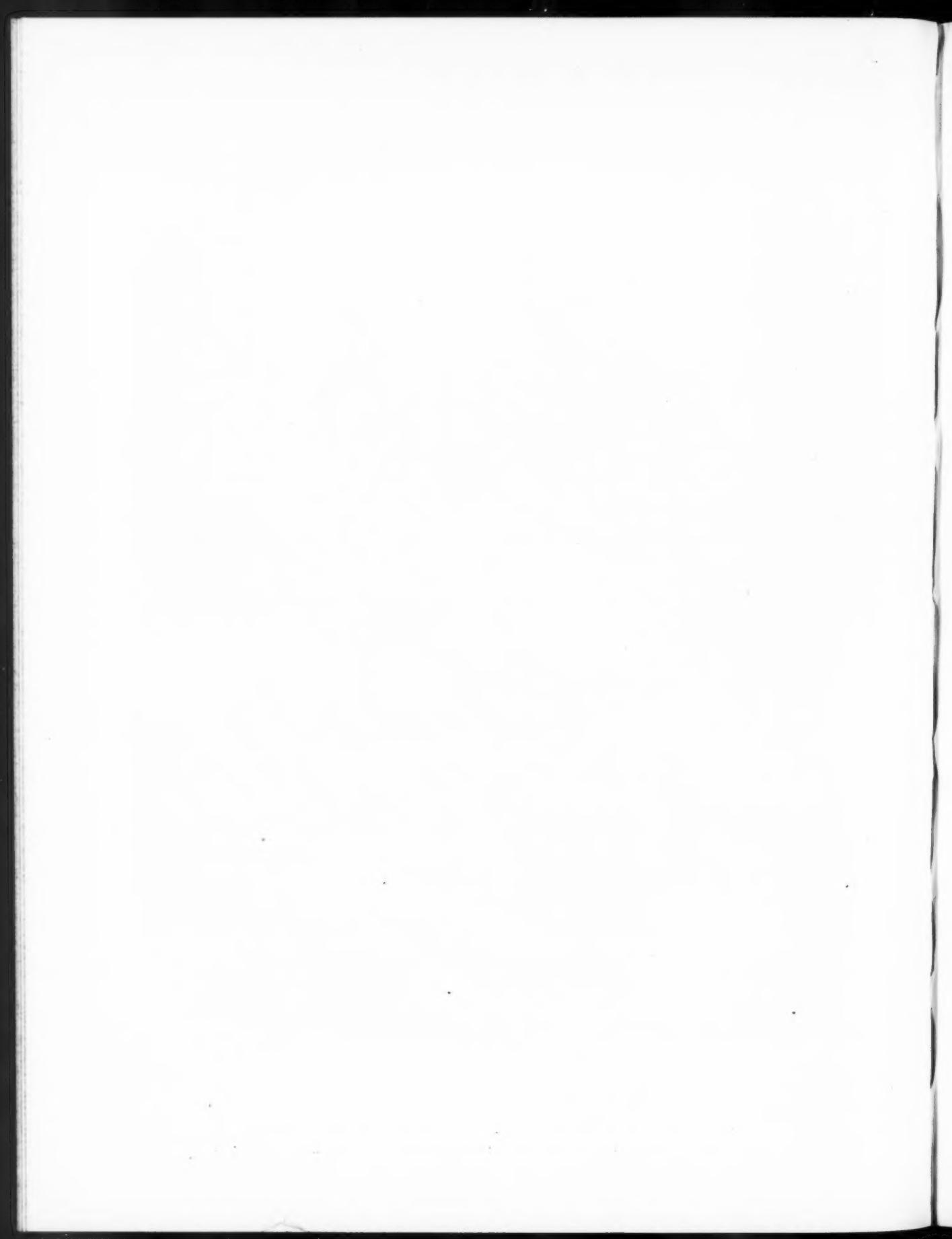
"Excellent Ceronet and Banjo, each in case, for good side-car." The honeymoon will be spent motoring.



## A MINISTERIAL BANK-HOLIDAY DREAM.

O TO BE AT HAMPSTEAD NOW THAT EASTER'S HERE!

[The House, for the first time in the memory of the oldest inhabitant, is to sit on Easter Monday.]





Old Gentleman. "EVERYTHING SEEMS VERY FORWARD, THOMAS."  
 Thomas. "YES, SIR; I SUPPOSE THAT BE ON ACCOUNT OF EASTER FALLIN' SO EARLY."  
*(Old Gentleman retires indoors to think it out.)*

#### CRICKET REFORM.

It is becoming more and more evident that something must be done to "brighten cricket." We have listened patiently to the many helpful proposals that have appeared in the Press in the last few weeks and given them our most thoughtful consideration, and we feel that now our turn has come.

It has been suggested in some quarters that spectators should be admitted free for the last hour's play of the day. That seems to us a very happy idea, and one which might be carried a good deal further. It is generally conceded that the game cannot exist without spectators. (It is not as if the players were doing it purely for the fun of the thing.) Well, why not admit all spectators free? A much larger crowd could then be confidently counted upon. We shall be told, of course, that the club's finances would suffer from such open-handed treatment. But we have not overlooked that difficulty. It could be met by making a small charge—of perhaps a shilling a head—"upon retiring," that is to say, as they go out.

The necessity for a band has been very generally insisted upon, and quite rightly. But it is ridiculous to suppose that every member of the crowd is interested in music. And if nothing more than this is to be done it is clear that the great majority will be reduced to looking on at the cricket after all. The band must be supplemented by other attractions. A few simple sideshows would do much—a picture palace perhaps at each corner of the ground, some pierrots, an Aunt Sally or two, and, let us say, a joy-wheel would probably be found quite sufficient, for ours is ever a good-humoured crowd. The programme would, of course, have to be changed, say, twice a week, and to meet this need every touring eleven might carry with it its own little troupe of itinerant artists. Lancashire would bring its clog-dancers, Somerset its team of wrestlers, and local talent would be encouraged in every possible way. On the more special occasions (that is to say, when the match itself is more than usually dull), pageants illustrating the development of the game from pre-historic times might parade the ground.

Again, all are agreed that there is too much cricket. For this a simple remedy could be found. Why not have a season with no cricket at all? It might foster appetite.

As to alterations in the actual rules of the game, we feel a little diffident in putting forth our views, for one of the very highest authorities has just told us that what cricket really wants is "ten years of sober government and freedom from scares and criticisms." It is not that we are without happy ideas on this subject. We still believe that our notion of making the wicket so wide that the ball on occasion would pass between the stumps is really a capital one, and would add quite a sporting new element to the relations between batsman and bowler. And our own special reform—the corrugated pitch—would without doubt introduce many bright and amusing episodes. But even if we may not tamper with the rules something can surely be done to improve cricket as a spectacle. Whatever other attractions we are able to provide there must always be a few members of the crowd, old sportsmen

of the bull-dog breed, who are there to see the game. Can we do nothing to relieve the monotony for them? At least the players might adopt the very obvious expedient of fancy dress, and it would be a pity not to make use of the umpires in the same way. At present they add little or nothing to the spectacular effect.

And now we come to the final reflection that there may be no need, after all, to take any steps to brighten cricket. The problem may solve itself. When we consider all that the W.S.P.U. has done in the last few months to brighten golf, surely there is no need to despair.

#### THE SPORTSMAN.

ALFRED BINKS PROSSER was enjoying himself immensely. He was seated in a covered stand, while outside, in the drizzling rain so characteristic of an English spring, the Porthampton "Yellowhammers" and the Ringsley "Lobsters" manoeuvred a heavy football over a large area of watery mud dotted here and there with pools of muddy water. A big button of brown and yellow—the Porthampton colours—was in his coat, and a gilt tie-pin made in the shape of a hammer also neatly indicated on which side his sympathies lay.

The "Yellowhammers" were leading by one goal to nil, and Alfred experienced a satisfying sense of having done his best to bring about this result. He had cheered his own men through fair play and foul, and had consistently booed their opponents. He had also shouted a great many pertinent exhortations, such as "Play the game, Ref.!" "Pull your socks up Ref.!" "Go and buy a pair of specs, Ref.!" Indeed his advice to the Referee must have been a great help to that harassed official. In addition to all this he had indulged in a spirited verbal skirmish with an excited Ringsleyite, and had wittily advised him to swallow a sponge if he couldn't speak plain for sputterin'.

Altogether, except for a natural and irritable hoarseness, Alfred felt at the top of his form when the whistle went for half-time.

He had long supported the "Yellowhammers" for the excellent reason that their ground was situated but twenty-two miles by rail from his home, while that of the only other professional club within reach on a Saturday afternoon

was forty-six. But it was not merely territorial enthusiasm which inspired him, and as the band floundered precariously out into the open he took a bundle of papers from his pocket and reviewed his position.

To Mr. Jim Blow, of Lucerne, Switzerland, he had sent a postal order for 10s. and various forecasts of football results. If all these forecasts proved correct he would win £12 10s. Among them he had given Porthampton to win.

From Mr. Ted Bangs, of Geneva,

foot with vexation. He remembered now what up to this moment he had utterly forgotten. Just as he had been on the point of crossing out Ringsley on the *Whispers* coupon a few days before, some obscure instinct had prompted him to stay his hand, and he had given the result a draw!

Four pounds a week for life! He dropped the tie-pin and the button into his pocket and went out for a breather. When he sat down again it was in another part of the stand.

Here for some time he urged on the efforts of the "Lobsters" with the utmost zeal, completely putting to shame a small group of Ringsleyites near him. Then at last the ball flashed into the "Yellowhammers'" net and made the scores level, and he gave a long sigh of relief as he watched the goal-keeper pick himself up and scrape the mud out of his mouth.

Minute after minute passed without any further score, and Alfred now sat unwontedly quiet, feeling more and more certain of his £4 a week. But five minutes from time the "Yellowhammers" seemed suddenly to develop a fresh access of energy. They began to press strongly; and in spite of himself, in defiance of all reason, Alfred found himself becoming wildly excited on their behalf. Fight against it as he would, there surged into his breast a mad, illogical, but sporting hope that Porthampton might win.

A minute from time the "Yellowhammers'" centre-forward found the ball at his feet about forty yards from the Ringsley goal. Alfred yelled piercingly, "Shoot, you silly fool! Shoot!" The centre did not shoot, but swung the ball to the outside right. Alfred rose to his feet and waved his arms. The outside man raced along the touch-line and lofted the ball towards the goal-mouth. Alfred stamped on the boards and bawled incoherently. The inside right slid forward, and with a quick jerk of his head sent the ball flying into a top corner of the net. Alfred brought down both his fists with a crash upon the bowler hat of the man in front of him, and with a thrill of pure, unhesitating, rapturous triumph screamed "GOAL!"

At the risk of losing £208 a year for life, Alfred Binks Prosser had shown himself a sportsman. . . . Nor, since his other predictions were all wrong, did he ever have cause to regret it.



*Mrs. Bigg (having the worst of the argument). "NAH THEN, CHUCK IT; YOU'VE ALWAYS GOT MORE TO SAY THAN YER 'AVE TO EAT."*

Switzerland, he might similarly expect to receive £25 if all his predictions were successful; and among them he had given Porthampton to win.

In the weekly Football Competition organised by *Trifles*, which offered a prize of £100 for a correct forecast of the results of twenty-four selected matches, he had given Porthampton to win.

In a parallel Competition arranged by *Masses Weekly* for a prize of £200, he had given Porthampton to win.

In the Competition announced by *Piffing Pars*, which offered a prize of £500 on the same terms, he had given Porthampton to win.

Likewise in the *Whispers* Competition for £4 a week for life—But stay! What was this? Alfred stamped his



*Joan.* "ONE REALLY SEES SOME VERY RESPECTABLE-LOOKING PEOPLE AMONG THESE THEATRICAL FOLK."  
*Rev. Darby.* "OH, DEAR ME, YES! I UNDERSTAND THAT MANY OF THEM HAVE QUITE NICE HOMES."

#### DEFERRED STOCK.

IT was a wonderful Spring afternoon. Perambulators blossomed on the Heath, boy scouts burgeoned into scout-masters, crocodiles had come out of their lairs. On every side of me young male shop-assistants walked and whispered honeyed nothings into the shell-like ears of young female dittos. I only was sad. This was because of a little explanation I had had with Araminta just after lunch. I was rather pleased than otherwise when she said to me, "Of course you remembered to buy that foolscap this morning?" because it gave me a chance to expound to her the principle on which I regulate the petty details of everyday life. It is a fixed idea with Araminta that I am slightly careless and unmethodical. Nothing could be further from the truth. So I said, "No," and at the same time smiled sardonically. (An article on sardonic smiles, illustrated by photographs of the faces of Cabinet Ministers smiling them, will be found on some other page of some other paper.) After I had got this over and my mouth had resumed its normal footing, Araminta, looking slightly relieved, went on. "But you said you simply must have it to-night,"

she murmured reproachfully, "and some bootlaces and dog biscuits——"

"Araminta," I broke in, "civilization is a lethargic monotony. We are both lotus-eaters; so is the dog. Constant supplies of little luxuries lie round about our door——"

"Not unless you order them up in the morning."

"—— lie, I should rather say, behind the counters of the little shops at the end of the street. Why should I get these things an instant before they are absolutely needed? If it is at all possible to infuse any flavour of romance into our swathed and padded existence, it can only be done by waiting until the last possible chance, and then sallying forth like a relief expedition and buying boot-powder, tooth-laces, sealing-biscuits and dog-wax at the psychological moment when failure to procure them would bring the wolf to the door. In all good stories of desert islands it is just when the dishevelled mariner despairs of being able to cook the yams or iguanas which he has been lassoing all morning with his neck-tie that the bale of hermetically-sealed pine-vestas is washed ashore from the wreck. So it is with me. It is quite true that I have been longing for foolscap, not to

speak of various other what-nots. It is quite true that I must have them this evening——"

"Isn't it better?" began Araminta, seizing a moment when I stopped for breath——

"No, it is not better to have them always in stock. That is your method, but not mine. In a few moments I shall issue forth and pay a visit to the stationer; from him I shall go on to the biscuit-monger and the bootwright and come back hung all over with little parcels like the good St. Nicholas. Your ideal, it seems, is the Garden of Alcinous, where the greengroceries never run out. Mine is the date-palm of the oasis which greets the eye of the thirsty Bedouin, now at his last gasp. Such is romance."

So saying, and before Araminta had time to recover from her bewilderment, I clapped my plum-coloured Carlsbad on my head and went out.

As I said before, all nature was smiling. Shop-assistants cooed of love. It was then that I became suddenly sad. I should not have minded about nature; it was the shop-assistants who worried me. I realised almost at once that it was Thursday afternoon; and Thursday is our early-closing day.

## THE LANDSCAPE GARDENER.

REALLY I know nothing about flowers. By a bit of luck, James, my gardener, whom I pay half-a-crown a week for combing the beds, knows nothing about them either; so my ignorance remains undiscovered. But in other people's gardens I have to make something of an effort to keep up appearances. Without flattering myself I may say that I have acquired a certain manner; I give the impression of the garden lover, or the man with shares in a seed-company, or—or something.

For instance, at Creek Cottage, Mrs. Atherley will say to me, "That's an *Amphilobertus Gemini*," pointing to something which I hadn't noticed behind a rake.

"I am not a bit surprised," I say calmly.

"And a *Gladiophinium Banksii* next to it."

"I suspected it," I confess in a hoarse whisper.

Towards flowers whose names I know I adopt a different tone.

"Aren't you surprised to see daffodils out so early?" says Mrs. Atherley with pride.

"There are lots out in London," I mention casually. "In the shops."

"So there are grapes," says Miss Atherley.

"I was not talking about grapes," I reply stiffly.

However at Creek Cottage just now I can afford to be natural; for it is not gardening which comes under discussion these days, but landscape-gardening, and anyone can be an authority on that. The Atherleys, fired by my tales of Sandringham, Chatsworth, Arundel, and other places where I am constantly spending the week-end, are re-adjusting their two-acre field. In future it will not be called "the garden" but "the grounds."

I was privileged to be shown over the grounds on my last visit to Creek Cottage.

"Here," said Mrs. Atherley, "we are having a plantation. It will keep the wind off; and we shall often sit here in the early days of summer. That's a weeping ash in the middle. There's another one over there. They'll be lovely, you know."

"What's that?" I asked, pointing to a bit of black stick on the left; which, even more than the other trees, gave the impression of having been left there by the gardener while he went for his lunch.

"That's a weeping willow."

"This is rather a tearful corner of the grounds," apologised Miss Atherley.

"We'll show you something brighter directly. Look there—that's the oak in which KING CHARLES lay hid. At least, it will be when it's grown a bit."

"Let's go on to the shrubbery," said Mrs. Atherley. "We are having a new grass path from here to the shrubbery. It's going to be called Henry's Walk."

Miss Atherley has a small brother called Henry. Also there were eight Kings of England called Henry. Many a time and oft one of those nine Henrys has paced up and down this grassy walk, his head bent, his hands clasped behind his back; while behind his furrowed brow, who shall say what world-schemes were hatching? Is it the thought of WOLSEY which makes him frown—or is he wondering where he left his catapult? Ah! who can tell us? Let us leave a veil of mystery over it . . . for the sake of the next visitor.

"The shrubbery," said Mrs. Atherley proudly, waving her hand at a couple of laurel bushes and a—I've forgotten its name now, but it is one of the few shrubs I really know.

"And if you're a gentleman," said Miss Atherley, "and want to get asked here again, you'll always call it the shrubbery."

"Really, I don't see what else you could call it," I said, wishing to be asked down again.

"The patch."

"True," I said. "I mean, Nonsense."

I was rather late for breakfast next morning; a pity on such a lovely spring day.

"I'm so sorry," I began, "but I was looking at the shrubbery from my window and I quite forgot the time."

"Good," said Miss Atherley.

"I must thank you for putting me in such a perfect room for it," I went on, warming to my subject. "One can actually see the shrubs—er—shrubbing. The plantation too seems a little thicker to me than yesterday."

"I expect it is."

"In fact, the tennis lawn—" I looked round anxiously. I had a sudden fear that it might be the new deer-park. "It still is the tennis lawn?" I asked.

"Yes. Why, what about it?"

"I was only going to say the tennis lawn had quite a lot of shadows on it. Oh, there's no doubt that the plantation is really asserting itself."

Eleven o'clock found me strolling in the grounds with Miss Atherley.

"You know," I said, as we paced Henry's Walk together, "the one thing the plantation wants is for a bird to nest in it. That is the hall-mark of a plantation."

"It's Mother's birthday to-morrow. Wouldn't it be a lovely surprise for her?"

"It would, indeed. Unfortunately this is a matter in which you require the co-operation of a feathered friend."

"Couldn't you try to persuade a bird to build a nest in the weeping ash? Just for this once?"

"You're asking me a very difficult thing," I said doubtfully. "Anything else I would do cheerfully for you; but to dictate to a bird on such a very domestic affair—. No, I'm afraid I must refuse."

"It need only just begin to build one," pleaded Miss Atherley, "because Mother's going up to town by your train to-morrow. As soon as she's out of the house the bird can go back to anywhere else it likes better."

"I will put that to any bird I see to-day," I said, "but I am doubtful."

"Oh, well," sighed Miss Atherley; "never mind."

\* \* \* \* \*

"What do you think?" cried Mrs. Atherley as she came in to breakfast next day. "There's a bird been nesting in the plantation!"

Miss Atherley looked at me in undisguised admiration. I looked quite surprised—I know I did.

"Well, well!" I said.

"You must come out afterwards and see the nest and tell me what bird it is. There are three eggs in it. I am afraid I don't know much about these things."

"I'm glad," I said thankfully. "I mean, I shall be glad to."

We went out eagerly after breakfast. On about the only tree in the plantation with a fork to it a nest balanced precariously. It had in it three pale-blue eggs splotched with light-brown. It appeared to be a blackbird's nest with another egg or two to come.

"It's been very quick about it," said Miss Atherley.

"Of our feathered bipeds," I said, frowning at her, "the blackbird is notoriously the most hasty."

"Isn't it lovely?" said Mrs. Atherley.

She was still talking about it as she climbed into the trap which was to take us to the station.

"One moment," I said, "I've forgotten something." I dashed into the house and out by a side door, and then sprinted for the plantation. I took the nest from the weeping and over-weighted ash and put it carefully back in the hedge by the tennis-lawn. Then I returned more leisurely to the house.

If you ever want a job of landscape-gardening thoroughly well done, you can always rely upon me. A. A. M.

## SOCIETY IN THE SUN.

(With acknowledgments to the Monte Carlo representatives of our photographic contemporaries.)



LORD AND LADY BERTIE MAINWARING TAKING A CONSTITUTIONAL. LADY BERTIE, WE NEED NOT REMIND OUR READERS, WAS RECENTLY ONE OF THE BEAUTIES OF THE LYRIC STAGE.



THE GRAND DUKE OF SPLOSHSTEIN-PUNTERNSBURG LEAVING THE CASINO WITH TOPSY, LADY SPIFFINGTON. WE HEAR HIS SERENE HIGHNESS HAS BEEN LOSING HEAVILY THIS SEASON, WHICH MAY ACCOUNT FOR HIS EXPRESSION.



GENERAL SIR HERCULES DE VERE BROWNE WALKING ON THE TERRACE WITH A FRIEND.



THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF DUMPSHIRE LEAVING THEIR HOTEL AFTER LUNCHEON.



## ANOTHER MILITANT.

Mother. "SO YOU TRIED TO TAKE HER HOOP AWAY AND SHE BOXED YOUR EARS? WELL, IT SERVED YOU QUITE RIGHT!"  
Bobby. "OII, MUMMY, MUMMY, YOU SEE I DIDN'T KNOW SHE WAS A SUFFRAGETTE!"

## THE CHANGELING.

"GRAY were her eyes as the deeps of a mountain-locked water,

Pink as the bloom of a blush-rose her countenance shone;  
Love made of my heart, Mrs. Jones, an immediate slaughter—I refer to the infant you showed me last week, to the daughter

Who seems to have gone.

"She knew a good thing when she saw it. Not everyone chooses,

Directly they gaze at my features, to burst into crows,  
But she, only lately alit from aerial cruises,  
Six months from the skies, she remembered *The Masque of the Muses*

And made for my nose.

"It was love at first sight; we were natures predestined to tally;

And I think, if those tales of a former existence are true, In Babylon I and your daughter erewhile had been pally,  
For as soon as I said to her, 'Diddums,' she answered my sally  
With a spirited 'Goo'!

"And now what is this you have brought me? This thing that gets furious,

Howls at my overtures, screams when I jest as I did,  
Blind to all bonds of the past, to all sense of a curious Psyche affinity. Lady, the article's spurious;  
That's not your kid.

"Not a trace of your ravishing child I detect in this gaby,  
With two little dots in a plum-coloured face; I can see  
Not a hint of my fair in this fractious—whatever it may be;  
I don't doubt that it's cutting its teeth, but your genuine baby  
Would never cut me.

"I am sorry (please take it away and do something to stop it;  
How can I go on in the midst of this horrible moan?)—  
I am sorry, I say, for your bright, your original poppet,  
But the facts are quite patent, the gypsies have managed  
to swap it  
For one of their own."

Sincerely I spoke. To assist the good lady I said it,  
But (strange to relate) she took umbrage; with kisses  
and purrs  
Besmothered the bantling, refused altogether to credit  
My views on its origin; calmed it and rocked it and fed it,  
And still says it's hers. EVOE.

"O'Neil is in the feather-weights (9st. and under) and Pollard competes in the feather-weights (10st. and under)."—*Gloucester Citizen*.  
JACK JOHNSON, we understand, is another entry for the feather-weights (20st. and under).

"The factory man that doesn't have belt troubles simply beats the trouble bird to his belts and keeps them in order." That's what our New York manager, Mr. Chase, says, and he has had as much or more belt experience than any man we know."—*Advt.*

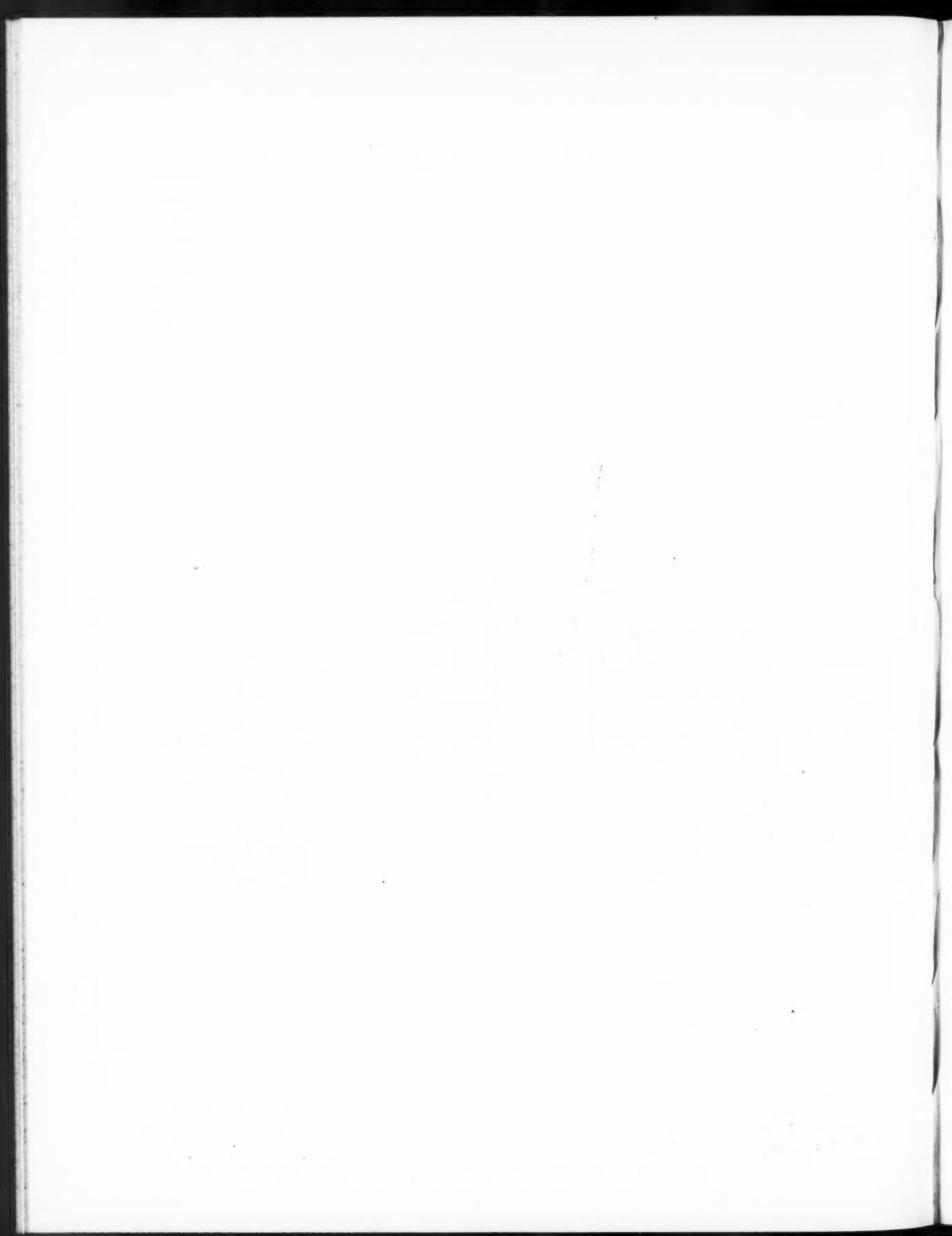
We do not like this sort of talk. It seems to us hardly delicate.



POUR LA PATRIE.

FRANCE (*calling for a third year of military service*). "THIS IS A GREAT SACRIFICE WHICH YOUR COUNTRY ASKS OF YOU, MON ENFANT. ARE YOU READY TO MAKE IT?"

CITIZEN SOLDIER. "BUT OF COURSE."



## ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

(EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TORY, M.P.)

*House of Commons, Monday, March 10.—La Session est morte. Vive la Session!*

Death happened last Friday. New birth dates from to-day. House, in fact, has enjoyed exhilarating recess of two days, one being Sunday, the other including usual Saturday half-holiday. Reasonable to expect in such circumstances that legislators who for thirteen months have had their noses in uncomfortable proximity to Parliamentary grindstone would come back browned by exposure to occasional rain, brimful of health and spirits, eager to buckle-to at business of fresh session. On the contrary, gathering in both Houses unprecedently small, deplorably depressed.

Noble Lords, whose business aptitude is well known, having listened to speeches from mover and seconder of Address, Leader of Opposition and Leader of House, straightway agreed, and went off to dinner on stroke of half-past seven. The Commons, faced by necessity of working double tides in order to meet exigencies of financial year, which closes on 31st, could not stand things later than nine minutes to eight, at which precise moment a dwindling gathering dispersed. But they did not confirm Address, over which talk will simmer for rest of the week. When limit of Ministerial patience is reached there will be loud complaints of tyrannical shortening of debate. And here, on very first night of Session, something like half a sitting is wantonly chucked away.

The MEMBER FOR SARK, looking in at House of Lords, found ABERCONWAY on his legs, moving Address with successful observance of consecrated custom by which original thought or independent criticism is regarded as undesirable. Afraid worry and weariness of long Session have told upon a disposition naturally kind, peculiarly sweet. SARK certainly grumpy.

"Seems to me," he growled, "Parliament is being run strictly on family lines. Just heard FRANCIS M'LAREN arrayed in velvet and fine linen make neat little speech seconding Address in

the Commons. Come here and find my old friend, his father, moving Address in Lords."

Young M'LAREN, gifted with a fine voice, accomplished in elocution, acquitted himself in manner that drew frequent cheers from both sides. Only threatened note of discord was struck by opening sentence, when he described himself as the youngest Member on Ministerial side. WEDGWOOD BENN, seated Gangway end of Treasury Bench, obviously thought remark superfluous. Accustomed to have that distinction attributed to him—he never assumes anything for himself—naturally did not like to hear it claimed by another. Made movement as if about to rise and

with ancient tradition, the MEMBER FOR THE CITY OF LONDON has a place found for him on Ministerial Bench on opening night of new Parliament. PRINCE ARTHUR doesn't hanker after privilege. But BANBURY, wrestling with native modesty, takes the prominent place, enlarging the bounds of precedent to include the third Session.

Reference in Speech from the Throne to anniversary of KING EDWARD's wedding-day stirred up memories of fifty years ago in bosom of young M'LAREN. "We are," he said, "all delighted to be reminded of those days long ago when QUEEN ALEXANDRA came in the Spring as a bride to London."

*Business done.—Parliament meets for third Session.*

*Friday.—What I like about ROWLAND HUNT is his thoroughness. Time flies so rapidly, events crowd upon each other with such bewildering insistence, that his first Parliamentary achievement is forgotten. Two years ago young bloods of Unionist party, convinced that "Arthur is played out," succeeded in relieving him of cares of Leadership. Have since from time to time had occasion to meditate upon sagacity of the move. It was ROWLAND HUNT who first raised standard of revolt. Declared from his place behind Front Opposition Bench that he had no confidence in his nominal Leader.*

This too much even for cynical indifference of PRINCE ARTHUR. Decided that if someone must go he was not the man to budge. Accordingly ROWLAND was drummed out of regiment, Party whips being no longer sent to him. By-and-by he came to heel again, and has since reserved his gift of denunciation for more legitimate objects on t'other side of the table.

Still in his ashes lives their wonted fire. Amendments to Address touching on most of conceivable topics have through the week crowded the paper. For the most part lengthy in phrase, rambling in argument, they excited no interest. Such as have been submitted have not succeeded in drawing an audience appreciably exceeding a quorum. Then comes ROWLAND, effectively bringing up the rear with an amendment whose comprehensiveness encircles the globe.



MORE BANBURY SENSATIONS.

He proposed to ask the House to approach the Sovereign with expression of regret "that Your Majesty's Government have failed to provide sufficient forces on sea or land or in the air for preserving the safety of the country and the Empire."

Omission of reference to the waters under the earth seems to imply exceptional satisfaction with the submarine flotilla. Unfortunately the Amendment, standing at end of long list, was not reached, and conjecture on this point lacks support or dismissal by explanation. 'Twill serve as it stood. When mighty intellect has bent itself to consideration of vital issues on land and sea and in the air, what is happening in the deep unfathomed caves of ocean may, like Ministerial plan for reform of Second Chamber, be left for consideration at a later unnamed date.

*Business done.*—After five days' dreary debate in House rarely half full, Address agreed to. Main interest centres in fact that at opening of new Session Ministerial majority was maintained at or about the round 100.

#### HOME LIES.

WHEN she comes to watch me play,  
Kate (my sister) loves to brag  
Of the goal I dropped one day:  
Says I smashed the corner-flag,  
And the ribs of Jones (the blue)—  
"Quite a gentle tackle, too!"

When my blind untutored smites  
Earn their spectacled rewards,  
Katie solemnly recites  
How I stopped the clock at Lord's  
"With a shot that HOBBS or FRY  
Simply wouldn't dare to try!"

When, again, to dearer friends  
She explains with what an ease,  
As the sacred flame descends,  
I descend to lines like these—  
Does my blushing sweetheart, Maud,  
Listen, rapt and overawed?

Not a bit of it; she knows  
Any self-respecting kid  
Always keeps a stock of those  
Things her brother never did—  
Knows that her relations weave  
Yarns which I do not believe.

All her people love to spout  
Streams of eulogistic rot,  
Vie with mine in pointing out  
Virtues that we haven't got,  
Till we cry through tears of shame:  
"Dear, I love you just the same!"

#### "The Small Woman.

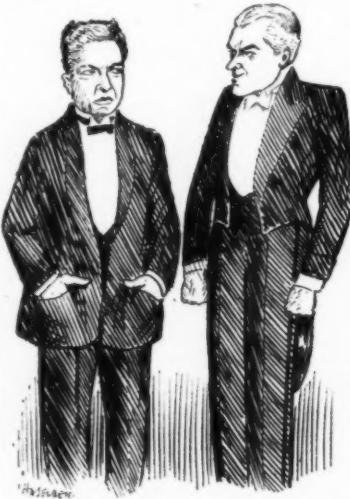
A Plea for a greater Range of Ready-made Sizes.—*Daily Chronicle.*

After all, size is not everything.

#### AT THE PLAY.

"OPEN WINDOWS."

WHETHER or not Mr. MASON, when he is out to write one of his pleasant books, is apt to look at real life too much through the eyes of a teller of tales with whom the story comes first and humanity second, it is certain that his new play betrays the hand of the novelist. He seemed to treat his audience as if they were readers of a serial of which they had had the misfortune to miss the first twenty chapters, and needed a *résumé* of the foregoing argument. Unhappily, the necessary revelations had to be made by word of mouth, and required a very delicate diplomacy, and this took up practically



*John Herrick* (Sir GEORGE ALEXANDER) to *Philip Brook* (Mr. SYDNEY VALENTINE).  
"Your request that I should hand your daughter over to you is couched in very unusual terms. You say nothing about 'the paternal instinct.'"

the whole of the First Act, and even then they were none too clear. But this wouldn't have mattered much if Mr. Mason, in his anxiety to be done with his preliminary chapters, had not been tempted to ignore the improbability of some of the conditions under which he made his *précis*. Thus for the purposes of his play he has somehow to impart to us the chequered career of *Philip Brook*, who under this assumed name is acting as secretary to *Sir Henry Cliffe*; and how does he do it? Scarcely has *John Herrick* (Home Secretary) set foot for the first time in *Sir Henry's* country house on a weekend visit, when his host says to him in so many words: "I have a secretary who has by heart the matter of the Bill which you want to discuss; but if you knew all that I know of his past—how he said he had climbed Mount

Everest when he hadn't—you might not care to have anything to do with him. I will therefore proceed to tell you the facts, and you shall decide for yourself." Now *Sir Henry* was under no sort of obligation to *Herrick* to tell him *Brook's* secret, which could not conceivably affect the value of his political advice; but he must have been under a good deal of obligation to *Brook* himself not to tell it. Such, however, are the exigencies of drama without a chorus when you cut out the first eighteen years of your story.

However, on the whole, Mr. MASON coped very adroitly not only with the technical difficulties involved in our enlightenment, but with the task of making us realize a tragedy of whose remote origin we had to learn by report. Perhaps he would have done better still to have sacrificed one of the unities, as he did in *The Witness for the Defence*, where he shewed before our eyes, in that most effective First Act, the source of all the subsequent trouble.

Signs were not wanting (as they say) that he has been studying other dramatic conventions besides the unities. His stage-irony was very pronounced. When *Lady Cliffe* went out of her way to wonder how *Herrick*, minion of fortune, would conduct himself in adversity, even the most childlike of us looked knowingly up to the blue sky in absolute confidence that a bolt would presently emerge.

But there was one convention which rather irritated me. Eighteen years or so before the curtain rose, *Brook* had passed a "riotous" week with his lover in Fontainebleau (I give the epithet which she employed when relieving her husband's curiosity about this pre-nuptial episode). Being too poor to marry her, and, I dare say, too much pressed for time (for his ship had already started from Tilbury), *Brook* went on to Marseilles to join an exploration party bound for the Himalayas. It was to secure a name for the child of this union that the lady hurriedly married the unsuspecting *Herrick*. But not once, apparently, during the three years of his time in the East did it occur to *Brook* that there could be any question of a child. Yet he was not without imagination, as shown in the matter of Mount Everest.

Mr. SYDNEY VALENTINE, who took the part of *Brook*, recognised that a man who is in revolt against life is seldom a very lovable personality; and he did his best (which can be very good) to discourage sympathy. On the other hand, sympathy was invited by the lady, very attractively played by Miss IRENE VANBRUGH. And I might have been quite



Little Boy. "CARRY YOUR BAG, SIR?"

Man. "No."

Little Boy. "THEN I 'OPE IT STRAINS YER."

Sorry for her if I could have convinced myself that, for the sake of legitimatising her child, this woman, who at the time was a star of promise in the art-world of Bohemian Paris, would have thrown up her career, married a man she didn't want, and gone to live a drab life with him and his people in Norwood (for these were still the days of his obscurity). The really pitiful figure was *Herrick* himself, but he was made of rather weak stuff, not very appealing.

The play had its moment of sensation. I do not refer to the audible thrill that ran through the theatre on the butler's announcement that Sir GEORGE ALEXANDER was about to make his first entry. I refer to the moment when *Herrick* summoned *Brook* to his room and the presence of his wife. The audience was palpably intrigued. Yet the scene when they met was not very moving. After all they had no quarrel. Neither had wronged the other. The real wrong done was by the wife to the husband, and she remained a silent spectator of the scene. It was just a question whether the child should be told the truth and allowed to choose between the two men. I am ashamed to say I was not much concerned one way or the other; though I know I

ought to have been pleased when her grace and sweetness imposed silence upon both her fathers—actual and adoptive.

Mr. MASON's theme did not make for hilarity, but I think he might still have given us more to laugh about, though I grant that his one joke was quite good. I omit, from sheer sense of tact, to mention the unrehearsed humours of a certain deciduous moustache, which went far to relieve the strain of the Second Act. The gay girlishness of *Elsie* (very prettily played by Miss ROSALIE TOLLER) brought relief, but tempered by the reflection that she was the very centre round which the tragedy turned.

The acting throughout was sound, but it revealed no very new talent and added little to established reputations.

In conclusion you may want to know what the "Open Windows" were for, and what they opened on. I think they had something to do with sanitation; and I know they had nothing to do with KEATS. I have an impression that they were first mentioned in connection with Norwood; and there, of course, the view from them may well have been "forlorn"; but not over "faerie lands."

O. S.

#### "IN THE SPRING."

We select the following items, from various catalogues which have lately reached us, as being in harmony with the approaching wedding season:

MISS FORTESCUE (LILY).—Delicately tinted with pink; long slender white throat; very elegant and graceful; slightly scented; looks best by artificial light; very popular in drawing-rooms and conservatories during winter months; requires attention; must not be cut.

MISS WINGATE (DAISY).—A strong new growth; crimson lips, bright eyes; reaches perfection out of doors when allowed to run wild; may be introduced anywhere with confidence.

THE HON. MRS. PENDRAGON (ROSE).—An old favourite; mature, well rounded, sturdy growth; clinging variety; needs re-planting in order to thrive.

LORD RONALD (KENTISH NUT).—True stock; thin, extra curled, quick sprouting imperial variety; much in request for dinner-tables.

MISS PERKINS (WALLFLOWER).—Very hardy; blooms all the year round; requires no attention.

## THE SOFA-DOG.

"NAUGHTY dog," said Francesca—she was addressing not me, but the Great Dane—"you have been on the sofa again."

"Well," I said, "he's off it now. As soon as he heard your fairy footsteps in the passage he began to slink off. It's quite wonderful what an ear dogs have for footsteps."

"He's a very wicked dog," said Francesca.

"No, no! He thinks it's a trick. He's got it into his head that you'd be bitterly disappointed if he didn't get on to the sofa when you're not in the room and get off it as soon as he hears you coming. Just you try him. Go into the passage. There! He's up again. Knock at the door. Didn't I tell you? Isn't he the quickest mover out of a sofa you ever saw? Oh, good dog, good dog!"

"Sofas," said Francesca, "are not meant for dogs. You encourage him to spoil them. You never think of the covers he ruins."

"Oh, yes," I said, "I do. I know the covers by heart. Let me tell you what they are. There are two brown herons apparently feasting on red azaleas, blue convolvulus (or convolvuli, if you prefer it) and yellow melons. It is an intricate and beautiful picture of heron-life, when the world was a younger and a better place."

"It was not designed for dogs," she said.

"There," I said, "you go again. For my part, I believe the inventor intended his pattern to be completed by a dog. It was his last picture. He had meant to weave in a dog somewhere, but death came upon him before he had time. 'Put a dog with the herons,' he murmured with his last breath, but they did not understand him. And now this dumb animal of ours takes up a great artist's thought and completes it."

"Covers it with mud," she said.

"Completes it," I repeated. "That dog teaches us all a lesson. Francesca, do you know who said that?"

"Yes," she said, "it was NAPOLEON, but he did not speak of furniture."

"He spoke of what he saw, and so do I. And, what is more, I will not allow——"

"You must not," she said, "be too Napoleonic. Such an attitude is improper in a modest household like ours. You were going to say——?"

"I was going to say that I will not allow myself to speak harshly to you, even if you fail in sympathy with the natural desire of a dog to avoid draughts."

"Draughts?"

"Yes, draughts. You will find if you lie down on the floor that it is a mass of draughts."

She bent herself to the carpet. "There isn't a vestige of draught," she said.

"Not there, Francesca," I cried. "That's the only draughtless spot in the room. Try close to the door. Lie down there with your face on your paws. Look out! The butler's coming."

"He isn't."

"No. I invented him; but you don't do it as well as the dog."

"You are too clever this morning," she said.

"It is a way I have," I said.

"And that being so," she continued, "I have determined to resign all my household duties into your hands."

"Francesca," I said, "you overwhelm me."

"Poor dear," she went on, talking softly to herself, "it is a very hard morning for him to begin on."

"No matter," I said; "I am ready. Only tell me what I have to do, so that I may note it down on paper."

"Food first," she said. "You will start with the cook."

"Oh, but that's delightful!" I said. "Do you know, Francesca, that it has been my one ambition to interview Mrs. Pears officially? I have caught glimpses of her when the children have had Christmas trees, but now I shall really know her."

"That's capital," said Francesca. "And you must order luncheon and dinner, you know."

"Yes," I said, "we will lunch on beefsteak and kidney pie, roly-poly pudding, and, just to celebrate the occasion, a Welsh rarebit."

"An excellent meal for the children," she said. "Alice and Frederick particularly will revel in it. But there might not be any kidneys."

"No kidneys!" I said. "There must be millions of kidneys in the world."

"Then," she said, "you must think of the servants, and you must order dinner for us. But I will not interfere with you further."

"Oh, yes," I said, "do interfere with me. I want you to. I like it. I'm not like some. I——"

"Well then," she said, "after Mrs. Pears you must see nurse. She's dissatisfied about something. And the housemaid wants to consult you about linen; and Bain has a list of garden things he wants to buy; and the boot-boy's mother is going to call at 11 o'clock to plead the cause of her son, who has done something abominable with a catapult; and after that you'll have to sit by Muriel and Nina while they practise; and there'll be lots of other things turning up as you go along. Away with you now to your work, and whatever happens keep a brave heart and a smiling face. I shall stay here to look after the dog and muse on the mutability of human affairs."

"Francesca," I said after a pause, "I have been thinking this matter over, and I have come to the conclusion that things had better go on as they are."

"I thought you'd think that," she said.

"The duties you propose to me, though various, are slight and unimportant. I should perform them too well and too quickly, and I should thus put a slur on all your past activities. You would never be able to look me in the face again. I cannot bear that thought. Go and busy yourself about the hive while I stay here and guard your self-respect."

"And you may as well," she said, "keep an eye on the furniture."

"Get down at once, Odin," I said. "Sofas were not meant for dogs."

R. C. L.

## REAL TURTLE.

On the cold of a pavement in ugly E.C.,

A show for the idle and curious giving,

Crude calipash stiffens and crude calipee,

Past feeling, let's hope, but yet horribly living;

Chelonian, spoil of a warm tropic tide,

With horny eyes glazing, with flippers' faint gesture,

They've laid him—awaiting a summons inside,

Where the chef and his satellites stand in white

vesture.

Does he hear—if at all, as I hope he does not—

In the chatter around him the monkeys that quarrel

Where the palms fringe the beaches, blue, steamy

and hot?

Is the roar of the traffic the surf on the coral?

I know not, but only beg leave to opine

That he's helplessly tragic, an object of pity;

May his ghost haunt your slumbers, O masters of

mine,

Who at seven absorb turtle soup in the City.



*Sportsman.* "CAN YOU TELL ME WHERE TO SEND A HANDKERCHIEF I HAVE FOUND BELONGING TO FATHER MALONEY?"  
*Irish Priest.* "I CAN; BUT HE 'LL HAVE NO USE FOR UT. HE 'S BEEN IN HIVEN THESE THREE WEEKS."

### THE EASTER BONNET.

A COMEDY OF A PARCELS LIFT.

*Miss Selina Lightfoot to Violette et Cie.*

*Easter Sunday, 1911.*

DEAR MADAM,—I am greatly disappointed not to receive the Marie Stuart bonnet which you promised me faithfully should be here on Saturday evening. The result is that I have had to attend church in my old one, thus breaking a habit now many years old of wearing new things on this day. But what troubles me more is your failure to keep your word, for that has never happened before.

Yours truly, SELINA LIGHTFOOT.

*Violette et Cie to Miss Lightfoot.*

*(By hand.) Easter Tuesday.*

DEAR MADAM,—Your letter is very surprising, for our messenger-boy, who brings this, positively assures us that he placed the bonnet in the parcels lift to your flat on Saturday at about 5.30. As the box was too large for the lift he took out the bonnet and wrapped some silver paper round it.

We are Yours obediently,

VIOLETTE ET CIE.

*Miss Lightfoot to Violette et Cie.*

*Easter Tuesday.*

DEAR MADAM,—I of course accept

the word of your messenger. He seems a very nice honest sort of boy; but unfortunately I cannot verify it as I should like to, as the lift has stuck in the flat above; and as the occupants—an elderly gentleman and his servant—are away for the Easter holidays we cannot get in to liberate it. If, as I cheerfully believe, the bonnet is in this lift, I will obtain possession of it on their return.

Yours truly, SELINA LIGHTFOOT.

*Miss Lightfoot to Mr. Browell.*

*(To await arrival.)*

*Easter Tuesday.*

Miss Lightfoot presents her compliments to Mr. Browell and begs to draw his attention to the fact that the parcels lift has been stuck in his flat ever since his departure, to the great annoyance and inconvenience of the other tenants. Will he kindly have it put right immediately? If by any chance a parcel in silver paper should be in the lift Miss Lightfoot would be glad to have it.

*Mr. Rupert Browell to Miss Lightfoot.*

*Three days later.*

Mr. Browell presents his compliments to Miss Lightfoot and begs to say that he exceedingly regrets that the lift should have behaved so incon-

siderately during his absence. It is now mended. Mr. Browell has pleasure in sending Miss Lightfoot the silver paper parcel.

*Miss Lightfoot to Mr. Browell.*

*The same day.*

Miss Lightfoot presents her compliments to Mr. Browell and would take it as a favour if he would inform her if the fish which has been occupying the lift for the past five days with her parcel belonged to him.

*Mr. Browell to Miss Lightfoot.*

*The same day.*

Mr. Browell presents his compliments to Miss Lightfoot and begs to state that the fish was a haddock ordered by his housekeeper before she was aware that both he and she were going away for Easter.

*Miss Lightfoot to Violette et Cie.*

*The same day.*

DEAR MADAM,—I find that, as I anticipated, your boy was quite truthful. The bonnet was in the lift; but by a sad mischance the lift contained also a haddock, which, since it was there some days, has saturated the bonnet with the odour of fish. Do you think anything could be done to put it right, and ought not the owner of the flat

above, where all the trouble occurred, to pay for it?

I am,

Yours truly,

SELINA LIGHTFOOT.

*Violette et Cie. to Miss Lightfoot.*

*The next day*

DEAR MADAM,—If you will send the bonnet we will see what can be done. Probably a new lining will serve. In any case we agree with you that it is hard that the expense should fall on you. Yours faithfully,

VIOLETTE ET CIE.

*Miss Lightfoot to Mr. Browell.*

*The same day.*

Miss Lightfoot presents her compliments to Mr. Browell and begs to inform him that her bonnet has been rendered unwearable by spending five days in the company of his haddock in a restricted space. Miss Lightfoot would be glad to know what Mr. Browell proposes to do about it.

*Mr. Browell to Miss Lightfoot.*

*The same day.*

Mr. Browell presents his compliments to Miss Lightfoot and greatly regrets that her bonnet has been rendered unwearable, but he suggests that the proper person to approach would be the landlord, who is responsible for the lift being kept in working order. It was not Mr. Browell's purchase of a fish that was irregular, but the failure of the machinery which moves the lift freely up and down.

*Miss Lightfoot to Violette et Cie.*

*The same day.*

DEAR MADAM,—If, as you think, a new lining will meet the case I agree to that being done; but I know that I shall always feel conscious of the bonnet's aroma, even if it has none, and I shall wear it only in the streets, omnibuses, &c., and never when calling, and never, of course, in church. Please tell me what the cost of the lining will be. Yours truly,

SELINA LIGHTFOOT.

*Miss Lightfoot to Mr. Browell.*

*Two days later.*

Miss Lightfoot presents her compliments to Mr. Browell and begs to inform him that the landlord denies responsibility. According to his letter he is surprised that Mr. Browell should leave his flat for so long with a fish in the lift. Miss Lightfoot has ascertained that a new lining to her bonnet, the least that can be done to it, will cost four shillings, and she begs to suggest that Mr. Browell should discharge this account.

*Mr. Browell to Miss Lightfoot.*

*The same day.*

Mr. Browell presents his compliments to Miss Lightfoot and begs to say that he considers the landlord's reply evasive. At the same time he cannot acquit himself of a certain negligence in the matter of the fish, and he therefore begs that Miss Lightfoot will allow him to defray the cost of a new bonnet and dispense with the injured one altogether.

*Miss Lightfoot to Mr. Browell.*

*The same day.*

Miss Lightfoot presents her compliments to Mr. Browell and begs to thank him for his extreme courtesy in the matter of the bonnet and the fish.

*Mr. Browell to Miss Lightfoot.*

*A week later.*

Mr. Browell presents his compliments to Miss Lightfoot and would like to inquire if she is a "Patience" player, because if so he would greatly esteem the privilege of calling upon her to explain a very fascinating variety known as "The king stops the way," which she possibly may not know and which comes out only once in very many times.

*Miss Lightfoot to Mr. Browell.*

*November 8, 1911.*

MY DEAR MR. BROWELL,—I have done it at last! It came out this evening, absolutely honestly too. I feel prouder than I can say.

Yours sincerely,  
SELINA LIGHTFOOT.

*Mr. Browell to Miss Lightfoot.*

*Easter Sunday, 1912.*

DEAREST SELINA,—Please accept the accompanying flowers as a reminder of last year's embarrassments and their happy sequel.

Your devoted RUPERT.

From *The Times* of June 3, 1912:—

BROWELL: LIGHTFOOT.—On the 2nd June, at Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Square, by the uncle of the bride, Canon Lightfoot, assisted by the Rev. Morrice Boy, Rupert Browell, of Belvedere Mansions, S.W., to Selina Lightfoot, second daughter of the late Major Lightfoot.

#### The Danger of Dictating with a Lisp.

"Office-boy wanted, to make himself youthful."—*Advt. in "Manchester Evening News."*

"In nearly all that pertains to woman's dress England has made and is making great strides."—*Daily Mail.*

One of the exceptions must be the skirt. Nobody makes great strides in that.

#### HALF AND HALF; OR, THE HAPPY MEAN.

[The fashion columns of an evening paper definitely threaten the *Zouave*, or trouser skirt.]

JONES's sails will now want trimmin';  
No more scope henceforth for him in  
Laying down the law to women.

Frankly, dismally he owns  
He was all for picking bones  
Up to now with Mrs. Jones.

She is pretty, she is good,  
But to all who ask her would  
Say she is misunderstood.

All the intellectual pitch,  
All the noble purpose which  
Animates the smarter rich

In a very marked degree  
Animates herself, but he  
Calls it mere frivolity.

When she kept a poodle cat,  
Very bald and very fat,  
He did not approve of that.

When she danced the Flapper's Flit  
(Hailed in Kensington as It)  
He professed to have a fit.

When she smoked her first cigar  
(Oh, how narrow husbands are!)  
"You," said he, "have gone too far."

In the breezy tête-à-tête  
Which ensued, he begged to state,  
She must be "more moderate."

How then could the man be hurt  
Later to behold her girt  
In a knickerbocker skirt

Coming down below the calves?  
"When," she said, "I wear Zouaves,  
I am doing things by halves."

#### Commercial Candour.

Notice in a shop-window:—

"Look. Look. Look.  
Price Low. Quality High.  
Beef Sausages.  
4d. lb.

Try them and note the flavour."

"Pruning is one of the operations to which the old saw . . . is peculiarly applicable."

*Daily News.*

Personally we have tried pruning our apple-trees with an old saw and cannot recommend it.

#### A Dangerous Business.

"NEGOTIATION GOING ON."

The National Union of Railwaymen is negotiating with the Board of Trade.

#### NEGOTIATOR INJURED.

Mr. F. E. Smith, while out hunting at Bicester had a toss while negotiating some posts and rails and had his rib broken."

*Madras Times.*

#### For the Actor-Manager's Cigar.

"For Sale.—Massive Hall-marked Silver Cigar Case. Size 5ft. by 3ft."

*Advt. in "Statesman."*



### THE SUSPECTED SEX.

Stationmaster-cum-porter of wayside "Halt." "ERE, BILL, JUST KEEP AN EYE ON THE OLE GAL ON THE PLATFORM WHILST I GETS MY DINNER." Bill. "WHOPFOR? SHE CAN'T COME TO NO 'ARM.'

Stationmaster. "I'M NOT THINKIN' OF 'ER 'EALTH, I'M THINKIN' ABOUT MY STATION. SHE MIGHT WANT TO BURN IT DOWN."

### OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

QUITE unshaken by the realists, Mrs. HUMPHRY WARD still continues to uphold the Right; and very well it is for the land-owners of England that she does so, for *Mr. Edmund Melrose*, most dramatic of the figures who influence *The Mating of Lydia* (SMITH, ELDER), tyrannical, sinister, italicate, combining a passion for antiques with the worst excesses of rack-renting and unrighteous eviction, would have been just the fellow for Mr. LLOYD GEORGE to get his knife into; as it is, a timely shot in the dark—and the pacified CHANCELLOR will rake in colossal death-duties, whilst the estate, handed over through the generosity of the heir to the wicked virtuoso's disowned daughter, will be merged with that of *Lord Tatham*, type of all that is best in our ancient aristocracy. *The Mating of Lydia* is dowered with Mrs. HUMPHRY WARD's accustomed dignity of style, painstaking if not too intimate characterisation, and wealth of unconcealed knowledge. (Did you know that certain Cumbrian dalesmen still preserved the ancient "yan-tyan-tethera" and so on for "one-two-three" in counting their sheep?) *Lydia* is a slightly advanced—but, oh, so slightly advanced—young woman who sketches the Cumberland scenery. Wooed ardently by young *Lord Tatham* she prefers *Claude Faversham*, before whom a moral struggle lies. Agent and heir-expectant of the Byronic miser, he has to decide whether he will break with him if he cannot persuade him to repair the insanitary cottages that fester on his domains. Enough to say that Virtue triumphs in the end, as it did in the brave days of old before fiction had condescended to the lower middle-

classes, the Pottery towns, and the outer suburbs. To all tired travellers in these wildernesses I recommend *The Mating of Lydia*.

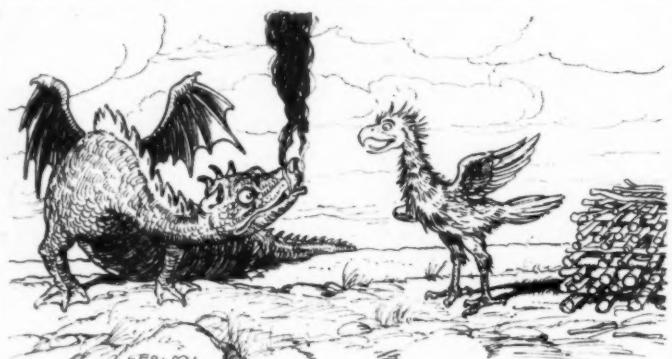
Perhaps when I have proclaimed myself as this great while past one of the most zealous admirers of "GEORGE A. BIRMINGHAM," which I certainly am, he will allow me to produce one very small bone for picking between us. It is not that I in the least object to his recapturing the first fine careless rapture of his funny stories by repeating them. I do not. Indeed, I myself could be after reading them every day for a whole year and more, the way I would still be amused at the hinder end of it. What I do think unnecessary is that he should call his new book *Doctor Whitty* (METHUEN), when that plausible hero is so obviously *Dr. Lucius O'Grady* and no one else. Moreover, not only does it contain at length the episode of the local band and the National Anthem, but the other characters of *Ballintra* tally exactly with those of *Ballymoy*, namely, *Colonel Richardson* with *Major Kent*, *Thady Glynn* with *Timothy Doyle*, and so on, each with each. The artist of the picture-wrapper seems to have felt this as much as I did, for his *Dr. Whitty* is as like Mr. CHARLES HAWTREY as makes no difference. So why not have added the *Regan* episode and sold it as the book of the play? However, this once stated, I have only to record as usual my delighted appreciation of Canon HANNAY's engaging hero, his wiles, his geniality, and his happy economies of the truth. So long as the reverend author continues thus successfully not to leave gaiety all to the laity he may call his characters by what names he pleases and be sure of a welcome from me.

It is asserted by those in the know that a book, to have any chance of a remunerative circulation nowadays, must be a novel, and the blame for this is attributed, with some confidence, to the depraved taste of the modern public. As one of the accused I resent the imputation and reply that if authors would treat us with less contempt we should be even more free with our money. Take the case of C. N. and A. M. WILLIAMSON; there is no doubt that the peculiar gift of these brilliant collaborators is the writing up of motor tours in a style inimitably vivid and light-hearted. As long as they continue their offer to put us in a car and give us a run over any part of the earth, no one will refuse the lift. Why then overload the caboodle with an alien plot of fictitious passion and adventure? Had *The Love Pirate* (METHUEN) been entitled *The Californian Tour* and been written as such, I should have been the last person to be disagreeable about it—it was the best of *bons voyages*; but the alleged virtues of *Nick Hilliard* and the *Princess di Sereno*, their loves and escapades, could not convince and might bore even a child. All the end and most of the middle of the story were apparent as soon as one read the beginning. I have no doubt that the authors' intentions are of the kindest; they feel obliged to entertain their passengers *en route* and to adopt this orthodox way of doing it. Let them, say I, relieve themselves of any such obligation on any future trips which they may invite me to take in their company, and I, for my part, shall hope there will be many such. There is still plenty of ground to cover and one, if only one, form of motor with which they have not yet experimented, to wit, our old friend, the Red General, of the Heavy Brigade.

Mr. CHARLES MARRIOTT's fine craftsmanship, his faculties of sensitive observation and fastidious selection increase (as is seemly but none too common) with the ripeness of his experience. There are a thousand-and-one charms in *The Catfish* (HURST AND BLACKETT) and not a page over which one does not murmur, "How true!" or "How jolly!" or "By Jove, that is so!" The Catfish, "the demon of the deep," is, apparently, to cod as a cat to rats—uncomfortable but extraordinarily stimulating. Yet the very delicate portrait of *Mary Festing*, who, herself passed by, loves and understands and mothers *George Tracy*, the hero, ill deserves such a label under it. I make bold to say that it is the only wrong thing in Mr. MARRIOTT's book. The rest is sheer delight. The story is just the development of this central character of *George*, with so much of the lives and thoughts of others as shall serve to illuminate it, and the author has handled his theme with an admirable restraint. With a few deft touches he has presented quite a dozen and a half of sentient, articulate, lovable people. He has dared to see and to state the beauty that is in life touched, yet unclouded, by sorrow, but not made squalid in the neo-realistic manner. *George Tracy* is too much alive, one would say, to be a portrait; he is the creation of an affectionate student of his kind. He remains interesting to the end, which is marriage. But his childhood is the

outstanding triumph of this remarkable miniature. Such and such things are thought and said and suffered by the human boy, and such and such wounds he deals, unwillingly and half-wittingly, to those he loves. And, to be frank, I find this *George Tracy* worth all the *Stalkies* on the one side and the *Eric Littlebylittles* on the other of the modern novelists' galleries of odd and even boys.

It seems to me that the STANLEY WEYMAN traitor-hero is rather *vieux jeu*. At first, like ping-pong, he was piquant because he was new. But now we know all about him. He comes from Paris. To save his neck or fill his depleted purse he has agreed to spy upon the *noblesse*, of which he is an off-shoot, and not till the last chapter will his gallantry and his misfortunes overcome the scorn with which he inspires the blue-blooded damsel whom he fain would wed. In *Skipper Anne* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON), Miss MARIAN BOWER has tried to break new ground by making NAPOLEON send her young gentleman of France to England, to the home of the English tutor who had married his Royalist aunt and become the father of the necessary Royalist maiden. It was a case of "your honour or your life." Of course he chose to keep his life, and went off under an assumed name to unravel the plot that was bothering NAPOLEON. I should have done the same in his case. Instinct and novel-reading experience would have told me how charming was my *émigrée* cousin; but once I had proved it I should have dropped my pinchbeck mask and let NAPOLEON (on the other side of the Channel) go hang. But this young man tried to make the best of both



*The Phoenix (preparing for his centennial transformation). "PARDON ME, SIR, BUT COULD YOU OBLIGE ME WITH A LIGHT?"*

stools, and fell between them. Incidentally he concealed his perfect knowledge of English from his bi-lingual relatives for more than two hundred pages, during all the time, in fact, that he was living in their house. I'm afraid, in the language of the Halls, I *don't think*. Apart from that, I find the story rather too obvious. And there are chapters, if you will believe me, with the headings, "The Plot Thickens," and "The Green-eyed Monster." But people of a less *blasé* condition of mind than myself will find that the book is pleasantly written and not unexciting.

#### Suggestion for an up-to-date examination paper:—

"Indicate the probable course of English History, if militant suffrage methods had been in fashion more than three centuries ago, and

1. Mary, Queen of Scots, having gone on hunger-strike, had been instantly released by the alarmed Elizabeth.

2. Through the destruction of the turf on Plymouth Hoe, Drake had been prevented from playing his historic game of bowls.

3. Corrosive acid had been poured on the letter inviting William of Orange to England."

"An Athens telegram to-day says the Crown Prince and the Greek Government have received telegrams of congratulation from all the sovereigns and heads of States, including President Poincaré, on the occasion of the fall of Janina. The message from Emperor William is stated as being particularly cordial."

*Manchester Evening News.*

We know that sort of massage—a cordial thump between the shoulder-blades.